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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 LAGOS 001591

SIPDIS

DEA FOR OI,OID, OE,OEE, OSE, SARI
SECSTATE FOR INL/LP,AF/W
POST FOR DEA RD AND ARD

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: GFUP-06-9259/NIGERIA; INTERNATIONAL CONTROLLED
DELIVERY OF 7 KILOGRAMS OF HEROIN

REF: LAGOS 01527

1. (SBU) SUMMARY. On October 11, DEA Attache (CA) Sam Gaye and British Drug Liaison Officer (DLO) Jon King in conjunction with Togolese authorities, conducted a successful international controlled delivery (ICD) of 7 kilograms of heroin in Lome, Togo. Nigerian national Fedelis Ezechukwu was arrested as a result of the ICD. The heroin originated from Karachi, Pakistan and was intended for a Nigerian drug trafficking organization (DTO). Under Togolese law, Ezechukwu faces a maximum sentence of 20 years in prison for importation of a dangerous controlled substance. Togolese Minister of Security expressed his gratitude with our help on the operation and promised full cooperation with the DLO and DEA for future operations.

2. (SBU) In late September 2005, British authorities in Dubai, U.E intercepted a shipment containing an undetermined quantity of heroin (reftel). The shipment originated in Karachi, Pakistan from: M.K. Enterprises, Room #67 Wazir Mansion, Nicol Road, Karachi. It was consigned to a Lome-based company : Sunny West, AU DU 24, Lome, Togo. The latter is owned by Sunday Chukwudi Geoffrey, a Nigerian resident in Togo. The shipment arrived in Togo via Nigeria. Upon the shipment's arrival in Lome, the Togolese drug police contacted the owner of the consignee company for investigation. Geoffrey told the police that he was a clearing agent and that the shipment in question was destined for overland shipment to Nigeria. cooperating with the police, Geoffrey agreed to contact the owner of the consignment via a Nigerian Cellular phone number. According to the drug police, Geoffrey informed the owner that his shipment had arrived in Lome. The owner agreed to travel by road from Nigeria to Lome to pick up the shipment.

3. (SBU) The police established surveillance near Lome's international airport where the shipment was being stored. Nigerian national Fedelis Ezechukwu traveled from Onitsha, Anambra State, Nigeria to Lome to pick up the shipment. He presented the bill of lading and claimed the consignment. As he was about to depart the airport, the police arrested him. He was then transported to the headquarters of the drug police for investigation.

4. (SBU) During post-arrest interrogation by CA Gaye and DLO King, Ezechukwu said he was recruited in Nigeria by a person named Ifeanyi Okeke to travel to Togo and pick up the shipment. He claimed he had met Okeke a few months earlier at a beer parlor in Lagos. During that encounter, Okeke asked him to pick up a shipment he was expecting from Pakistan. Okeke promised to pay him when the shipment arrived safely in Nigeria. Ezechukwu claimed he did not know much about Okeke nor did he have Okeke's address. The only information he had was Okeke's Nigerian cellular phone number (0803-360-8763). Ezechukwu said he was instructed to call the cellular number when he arrived in Nigeria. At that time, Okeke would direct him where to take the shipment. During the interrogation, Ezechukwu was evasive and seemed to know more than he was admitting.

5. (SBU) The 7 kilograms of heroin were concealed in 146 packages, each containing 12 cotton rods (each cotton rod contained 5 grams in clear plastic). The heroin was weighed and sealed. A sample was taken to the laboratory for analysis. Defendant Ezechukwu was charged with importation of dangerous controlled substance under Togolese law. He faces a maximum sentence of 20 years.

6. (SBU) Following this operation, Colonel Laoukpessi Pitalouna-Ani, Togolese Minister of Security, invited CA Gaye and DLO King to his office. The minister expressed his gratitude and promised full cooperation with the DLO and DEA. The minister added that Togo would not be used as safehaven for drugs and that he was prepared to move against those "military and government officials" involved in drug trafficking. The minister urged DEA and the DLO to share information linking government officials to drug trafficking.

7. (SBU) Comment: This is the first instance of collaboration on an ICD with our British counterpart in West Africa in recent memory, and it was successful. This paves

the way to more such operations. While we do not know much about Colonel LaoukpeSSI, we were pleased with the work of the Togolese in this matter. LaoukpeSSI appeared to be committed to international collaboration on counter narcotics and we plan to take him up on his promise to cooperate on future operations. End comment.

BROWNE